Nicobar and Lakshwadeep islands. Regional airlines are also being encouraged to airlink unconnected districts and towns of tourists interest.

Target Fixed for Telephone Lines

231. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the target fixed for providing telephone lines in the country during the current year, circle-wise;

(b) the percentage of the projection met till date;

(c) the names of the telecom circles which are behind the targets stating the reasons for the shortfall in the targets; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to achieve the annual target for telephone lines?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) The target fixed for providing telephone lines in the country during the current year (1996-97) is 24.5 lakhs. The circle-wise target is given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) 29.87 percent of the target is met till 31.10.96.

(c) and (d). Necessary equipments and funds for providing telephone lines have been allotted by the Government to all the Telecom Circles and the equipments have started reaching the sites. It is expected that the target set for 1996-97 is likely to be fully met.

STATEMENT

S.No.	Name of Unit	Annual Target 1996-97
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	123000
2.	Assam	18000
3.	Bihar	47000
4.	Gujarat	188000
5.	Haryana	64000
6.	Himachal Pradesh	27000
7.	J & K	23000
8.	Karnataka	133000
9.	Kerala	228000
10.	M.P.	45000
11.	Maharashtra	203000
12.	North-East	18000
13.	Orissa	27000
14.	Punjab	153000
15.	Rajasthan	123000
16.	Tamilnadu	188000
17.	U. Pradesh (E)	80000
18.	U. Pradesh (W)	75000
19.	W. Bengal	55000
20.	A. Nicobar	2000
21.	Mumbai	250000
22.	Calcutta	55000
23.	Delhi	250000
24.	Madras	75000
	Total	2450000

Handing Over of Mining Rights

232. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether mining rights of diamond deposits in several States are being handed over to International mining giant DE BEERS;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) its impact on Mineral Policy?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b). No, Sir. Mineral Concessions are granted by the respective State Government as per provisions of Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 and rules made thereunder only.

(c) Does not arise.

Adult Channel

233. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING pleased to state :

(a) whether a number of women's Organisations, including the National Federation of Indian Women and YWCA had urged the Government to prevent launching of the country's first adult satellite TV Channel "Plus 21"; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. We have received representation on the subject on behalf of a number of women's organisations, including the National Federation of Indian Women and YWCA. A Civil Writ Petition has also been filed in Delhi High Court on the same subject by the National Commission for Women and the matter is subjudice.